

## WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

### COMMITTEE: SOCIAL SERVICES

**DATE:** JUNE 26, 2009

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:	OTHERS PRESENT:
SUPERVISORS TESSIER	REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES:
O'CONNOR	SHEILA WEAVER, COMMISSIONER
SHEEHAN	JOAN SADY, CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BENTLEY	JOANN MCKINSTRY, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF
KENNY	ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL SERVICES
MERLINO	SUPERVISOR THOMAS
STRAINER	ALYSON MARTIN, <i>THE POST STAR</i>
	THOM RANDALL, <i>THE ADIRONDACK JOURNAL</i>
	SARAH MCLENITHAN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

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Mr. Tessier called the meeting of the Social Services Committee to order at 10:36 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Sheila Weaver, Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (DSS), who distributed copies of the Agenda to the Committee members. *A copy of the Agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver presented the Overtime Report, which was included in the Agenda. She noted that the savings to the County in overtime expenses from January to May of 2009 compared to the prior year was \$22,778.96. She added that due to staff reductions she had reduced the full-time salaries in the DSS budget by \$28,309.34; and she said, \$3,970.48 had been saved in part-time salaries. Mr. Kenny commended Ms. Weaver for her efforts to reduce the amount of overtime costs incurred by the DSS and Mr. Merlino concurred.

Ms. Weaver advised that the DSS had received unanticipated funding from the Federal Stimulus Food Stamp/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in the amount of \$31,888 for the 2009 fiscal year under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Ms. Weaver commended the Employment Unit of the DSS for having a 41.6% rate of participation for the month, which was the fifth highest rate in the State. She noted that the engagement rate, which referred to how many of the employable people were performing work-related activities, had been number one in the State for the past six months.

With regards to cost savings, Ms. Weaver apprised that the County would be saving \$7,200 on an annual basis because the contract for psychological services with Dr. Lydia Treadway was no longer necessary. Due to the staff reductions in the Probation Department, Ms. Weaver advised that there would be a cost savings in the DSS contract with the Probation Department in the amount of \$35,749.

Ms. Weaver requested that the DSS pay the Public Health Department for providing the Early Intervention program through administration funds. She noted that the funds were 100% reimbursable through the State.

It was the consensus of the Committee that the DSS pay the Public Health Department with administration funds for providing the Early Intervention program.

Ms. Weaver advised that Lisa Zulauf had been successful with the negotiations with local hotel owners, as they had agreed to charge the County \$150 less than the normal weekly rates during the summer season and she queried whether a process existed to recognize Ms. Zulauf. Mr. Kenny replied that there was an Employee Suggestion Program which allotted a \$100 savings bond to employees who presented valid cost saving ideas to the County and he suggested that Ms. Weaver have Ms. Zulauf complete the appropriate forms to access this benefit.

Ms. Weaver presented the following requests for authorization to attend meeting or convention:

- a) Harold McGee, Douglas Herschleb, Katherine Baker, Jamie Brochu and herself to attend the NYPWA Summer Conference at the Saratoga Hilton Hotel in Saratoga Springs, New York from July 22 through July 24, 2009; and
- b) Kerri Neifeld to attend the Caseworker Common Core Training at the CDHS in Albany, New York on specified dates from June 29 through August 14, 2009. She noted this request had been approved at a prior Committee meeting; however, she stated, the duration of the training had been decreased.

It was the consensus of the Committee to approve the travel requests as presented above. *Copies of the requests for Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention are on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Weaver requested to fill the vacant position of Senior Account Clerk, base salary of \$28,041, due to resignation. She noted that the position received 59% reimbursement through Federal and State funds.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Senior Account Clerk, base salary of \$28,041, due to resignation, and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position is on file with the minutes.*

Moving along, Ms. Weaver referred to the listing of pending items derived from prior Committee meetings, which she detailed as follows:

- 1) With regards to an update on methadone treatment, Ms. Weaver advised the plans were moving forward with an anticipated start date of September;
- 2) Ms. Weaver stated that Paul Dusek, County Attorney, had not received the number of caseloads and number of Attorneys from Saratoga and Essex Counties;

- 3) Regarding unemployment costs pertaining to reimbursable positions, Ms. Weaver apprised that the DSS received reimbursement for unemployment costs through the Federal and State Government; and
- 4) Ms. Weaver advised that she was awaiting test results from Civil Service prior to determining which would be the third position she had been directed to abolish.

Mr. O'Connor queried if the information necessary to take action regarding the legal caseload would be available for the next Committee meeting. Ms. Weaver explained that the new DSS Attorney was becoming accustomed to his job duties; however, she noted, the legal caseload pertaining to child protective services had more than tripled within the last year. She mentioned that hiring a Paralegal to file all the necessary legal paperwork may aid in alleviating some of the stress on the Attorney.

Ms. Weaver requested an executive session to discuss the employment history of a particular person.

Motion was made by Mr. Bentley, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously that executive session be declared pursuant to section 105 (e) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive session was declared from 10:46 a.m. to 10:55 a.m.

Upon the Committee reconvening, Mr. Tessier announced that no action was necessary pursuant to the executive session.

Mr. Thomas commended Ms. Weaver for her efforts on keeping apprised of the prospective layout of the new Human Services Building (HSB).

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion made by Mr. Kenny and seconded by Mr. Strainer, Mr. Tessier adjourned the meeting at 10:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah McLenithan  
Legislative Office Specialist